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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC 0119
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3942
RUEHNZ/AMCONSUL AUCKLAND 1211
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 1611

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 000185

SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EAP/ANP - DAN RICCI
COMMERCE FOR NWS - JJONES

E.O. 12985: N/A
TAGS: OTRA TPHY KSCA SENV KSCI NZ
SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR JEFFREY MICHAEL OSIENSKY, MARCH 25 - 31, 2007

REF: USDOC 1753

¶1. (SBU) Embassy welcomes and grants country clearance to Department of Commerce NOAA National Weather Service Official Jeffrey Michael Osiensky to travel to Rotorua, New Zealand from March 25 - 31, 2007. The purpose of this visit is to attend and give a presentation at the World Meteorological Organization sponsored workshop on volcanic ash.

¶2. (U) Embassy understands that country clearance is the only assistance required.

¶3. (SBU) Embassy point of contact is Political Officer Tod Duran. Contact details are as follows:

Office: 644-462-6043
Fax: 644-472-3537
Cell: 027-451-2538
E-mail: DuranTE@state.gov

¶4. (SBU) All TDY visitors to Embassy Wellington are required to report to the Regional Security Office for a security briefing if they have not completed an approved overseas personal security-training course.

¶5. (U) Visitors should use local taxi service, which is generally safe, reliable and frequent.

¶6. (U) Travelers can exchange currency at the airport upon arrival and ATM machines are readily available throughout New Zealand. Check cashing privileges at the Embassy are restricted to traveler's checks only up to USD $300.00. Personal checks will not be accepted.

¶7. (SBU) Biosecurity Fines:

The Government of New Zealand instituted fines for non-declared biosecurity hazards on travelers entering New Zealand with undeclared plant, animal or food material. Travelers found carrying these undeclared items will be immediately fined NZD $200.00 (USD $150.00). Biosecurity is a serious issue in New Zealand and fines will be administered immediately and without warnings.

¶8. (SBU) Security Information:

a. (SBU) All U.S. citizen personnel serving under the Chief of Mission authority in a temporary status of 30 days or more must complete appropriate overseas personal security training prior to travel (04 State 66580). Employees who have completed the Security Overseas Seminar course at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) after June 1, 2000, meet this requirement. All other TDY personnel must

either (1) complete the approved seminar at FSI entitled "Serving Abroad for Families and Employees" (SAFE), or (2) have their agency certify to the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security that the employee has undergone equivalent security training. The contact for this training is Assistant Director for Training at (703) 205-2617. Country clearance will not be granted for any traveler with planned TDY in excess of 30 days if this information is not stated/certified. POC for additional information is RSO Wellington.

b. (SBU) The U.S. Mission in New Zealand currently rates the threat from transnational and indigenous terrorism as low. There are no terrorist groups or support groups believed to be operating in New Zealand at this time. In light of the worldwide security alert all visitors should heighten their security awareness and report any unusual incidents to the Regional Security Officer.

c. (SBU) Anonymous telephonic threats and obscure threat mail have occasionally targeted U.S. diplomatic missions in New Zealand. In response to U.S. policies and actions, various groups in New Zealand have demonstrated occasionally at the Embassy in Wellington and at the Consulate in Auckland. These demonstrations are usually small and are peacefully conducted. During these demonstrations, the host country police and protective services normally provide adequate protection to the Embassy and Consulate.

d. (SBU) New Zealand is considered a medium threat crime environment. As such, Wellington and Auckland have experienced an increase in violent and petty crimes, but they are usually non-confrontational in nature. However, home invasion robberies and assaults, once very rare, are becoming more frequent. Burglaries and thefts occur countrywide but primarily in the large cities of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington, and visitors should be especially aware that street crime, such as scams and pickpockets,

is a daily occurrence in these cities. Common sense precautions should be taken, especially at night, to avoid becoming a target of opportunity.

e. (SBU) Generally, New Zealand does not play a significant role in the world drug situation; however, evidence indicates that New Zealand has been utilized as a transit point for shipments of Ecstasy, Heroin and Cocaine to Australia. The most abused drugs in New Zealand are locally produced methamphetamine and cannabis. There have been increased amounts of lab seizures and violent crime associated with groups attempting to control this market.

f. (U) All forms of public transportation are generally safe at all times of the day; however, at night visitors should use common sense precautions so as not to become a target of opportunity.

g. (U) The traffic situation in Auckland can be difficult with a moderate amount of congestion. Wellington and Christchurch traffic is significantly better; however, during rush hour moderate delays can be expected. Visitors are advised that traffic drives on the left-hand side of the road. Visitors are advised that traffic accidents are common and that it is safe to pull over so that police may take an accident report. However, visitors who experience hostility or anti-American sentiment should depart the scene immediately and notify the RSO.

h. (SBU) Travelers intending to bring and use any USG provided electronic or photographic equipment must contact the RSO prior to introducing that equipment into the Chancery. Personal electronic or photographic equipment is not permitted in the Chancery. Only in severely limited cases will a notebook or laptop computer be permitted to be used in the Chancery.

i. (U) Precautions should also be taken to not discuss sensitive or classified information outside secure environments or over unsecured and/or cellular telephones, and to securely safeguard classified or sensitive information at the Chancery and not at hotels or residences.

j. (U) Visitors should also be aware of the State Department's

Consular Information sheet for New Zealand and the most recent Worldwide Caution Public Announcements, which are available via the Internet at http://travel.state.gov

k. (U) In essence, visitors to New Zealand must exercise appropriate caution and be alert to their surroundings with regard to their personal security. Suspicious incidents/activities should be reported to RSO Wellington (Telephone (64)(4)462-6000, 24 hours/day).

Keegan